

THE  
V A N I T Y  
O F  
THOUGHTS  
DISCOVERED:  
WITH  
THEIR DANGER  
AND CVRE:

---

BY  
T H O : G O O D V V I N , B . D .

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L O N D O N ,

Printed by M . F . for R . D awman , and  
L . F awne , at the signe of the Brazen  
Serpent in Pauls Church-yard , 1638 .

1638. Jan

Abigail Chastooe her Book  
Elizabeth Lorne wrot this with a  
rough Pen

SA 46

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THE  
**VANITY**  
OF  
THOUGHTS.

---

J E R E M . 4.14.

*How long shall thy vaine  
thoughts lodge within  
thee?*

**I**N these words hee compares the heart unto some house of common resort, made as  
A 5 it

it were with many and large roomes to entertaine and lodge multitudes of Guests in ; into which, before conversion , all the vaine, light, wanton, prophanie, dissolute thoughts, that poste up and downe the World ( as your thoughts doe ) and runne riot all the day, have free, open accessse , the heart keeps open house to them, gives them willing, cheerfull welcome, and entertainment ; accompanies them, travels o're all the world for the daintiest pleasures to feed them with ; *Lodgeth*, harbours them, and there they, like unruly Gallants, and roysters, *lodge*, and revell it day

day and night, and defile those roomes they lodge in, with their loathsonie filth and vomits. *How long, sayes the Lord, shall they lodge therein?* *Whilst I with my Spirit, my Sonne, and traine of graces, stand at the doore and knock, Rev.*

*3. 20.* and cannot finde admittance; of all which filthinesse, &c. the *Heart* this house must be *washed*; *wash thy heart from wickednesse.* *Washt,* not swept onely of grosser evills ( as *Matth. 12.43. the house,* (*the uncleane spirit re-enters into*) is said to bee-swept of evills that lay loose and uppermost ) but *washt,* and clenched of those defilements which sticke  
more

more close, and are incorporated, and wrought in, into the Spirit. And 2. those *vaine* and unruly guests must bee turned out of doores, without any warning, they have staid there long enough; too long; *How long?* and the *time past may suffice*, as the Apostle speaks, they must lodge there no more. The house, the soule is not in conversion to bee puld downe, but onely these guests turned out; and though kept out they cannot be, they will still enter whilst wee are in these houses of clay, yet lodge they must not: if thoughts of anger and revenge come in, in the morning or day

day time, they must bee turned out e're night, *Let not the Sunne goe downe upon your wrath, Ephes.4.26.* For so you may come to lodge yet a worser guest in your heart with them: *Give not place to the Devil,* (for it followes) who will *bring seven worse with him.* If uncleane thoughts offer to come to bed to thee, when thou liest downe, let them not lodge with thee. To conclude, it is not what thoughts are in your hearts, and passe through them, as what lodging they have, that doth difference your repentance: many good thoughts and motions may passe, as *Strangers thorow a bad mans*

mans heart ; and so likewise multitudes of vaine thoughts may make a thorew-fare of a beleivers heart, and disturbe him in good duties, by knockings and interruptions, and breakings in upon the heart of a good man ; but still they lodge not there ; are not fostered, harboured.

My scope in our ordinary course is, to discover the wickednesse and vanitie of the heart by nature : in the heart we are yet but in the upper parts of it, the understanding, and the defilements thereof, which are to bee washt out of it, and the next defilement, which in my broken order

der I meane to handle, is that which is here specified, *the vanity of your thoughts*: for the discovery sake of which onely, I chose this Text, as my ground; *That* is it, therefore, which I will chiefly insist upon. A *subject* which, I confess, would prove of all else the vastest. To make an exact particular discovery of the vanities in our thoughts, to travell over the whole Creation, and to take a survey, and give an account of all that vanity abounds in all the creatures, was (as you know) the taske of the wisest of men, *Solomon*; the flowre of his studies and

and labours : But the *vani-*  
*tie of our thoughts*, are as  
multiplied much in us ;  
this *little world* affords  
more varieties of vanities,  
than the *Great*. Our  
thoughts made the *crea-*  
*tures subject to vanitie*,  
*Rom. 8.20.* therfore them-  
selves are subject to vani-  
ty much more. In hand-  
ling of them I will shew  
you, 1. What is meant by  
*Thoughts*. 2. What by *va-*  
*nity*. 3. That *our thoughts*  
are *vaine*. 4. Wherein  
that vanity doth consist,  
both in the generall, and  
some particulars.

First, what is meant by  
*thoughts*, especially as  
they are the intended sub-  
ject of this discourse,  
which

which in so vast an argument I must necessarily set limits unto: 1. By *thoughts*, the Scriptures do comprehend all the *internal* acts of the minde of man, of what faculty soever, all those reasonings, consultations, purposes, resolutions, intents, ends, desires, and cares of the minde of man, as opposed to our *external* words and actions, so *Isay 66. 18.* All acts are divided into those two, *I know their workes and their thoughts*: what is transacted within the minde, is called the *thoughts*; what thereof do manifest themselves, and breake out in actions, are called *workes*.

And

And so Genes. 6. 5. Every *imagination* of the thoughts, (omne *figmen-tum*) all the creatures the minde frames within it selfe, purposes, desires, &c. (as it is noted in the margin) are evill; where by thoughts are understood all that *comes within the minde*, (as Ezech. 11. 5. the phrase is) and so indeed we vulgarly use it, and understand it, so *To remem-ber* a man, is, to *thinke of* him, Gen. 40. 14. to have *purposed* a thing, we say, *I thought to doe it*. To take care about a businesse, is to take thought, 1 Sam. 9. 5. And the reason, why all may thus bee called *the thoughts*, is, because indeed

deed, all affections, desires, purposes, are stirred up by thoughts, bred, fomented, and nourished by them: no one thought passeth, but it stirreth some affection of feare, joy, care, grief, &c. No, although they are thus *largely* taken here, yet I intend not to handle the *vanity* of them in so large a sense at present: I must confine my selfe, as strictly as may be, to the *vanity* of that, which is more *properly* called the *thinking, meditating, considering power of man*, which is in his understanding or spirit, that being the subject I have in hand: *Thoughts* not being in this sense opposed one-  
ly

ly to *your workes*, but unto purposes and intents, so *Hebr. 4. 12.* as the *soule* and *spirit*, so thoughts and intents seeme to bee opposed. And *Job 20. 2, 3.* *Thoughts* are appropriated to the *Spirit of understanding*. And againe yet more strictly, for in the understanding I meane not to speake of, generally, all thoughts therein, neither, as not of the *reasonings* or *deliberations* in our actions: but those *musings* onely in the *Speculative* part.

And so, I can no other-  
wise expresse them to  
you, than thus. Those  
same first, more *simple*  
*conceits*, *apprehensions* that  
arise;

arise; those fancies, meditations, which the understanding by the helpe of fancy frames within it selfe of things; those whereon your mindes ponder and pore, and muse upon things, these I meane by thoughts, I meane those talkings of our mindes with the things wee know, as the Scripture calls it, *Prov. 6. 22.* those same parleys, enterviews, chatings, the minde hath with the things let into it, with the things wee feare, with the things wee love. For all these things our mindes make their companions, and our thoughts hold them discourse, and have a thousand conceits about

about them ; this I meane by *thoughts*. For besides that *reasoning power*, *deliberating power*, whereby wee aske our selves continually, *what shall wee doe?* and whereby wee reason and discusse things, which is a more inward closet, the Cabinet and privie councell of the heart, there is a more outward lodging, that presence chamber, which entertaines all commers, which is the *thinking*, *meditating*, *musing* power in man, which suggesteth matter for deliberations, and consultations, and reasonings, which holds the *objects* till we view them, which entertaineth all that come to speake

speake with any of our affections.

2. I adde, which *the minde frames within it self,* so the Scripture expresseth their originall to us, and their maner of rising.

*Prov. 6. 14. Frowardnesse is in his heart, fabricatur, hee forgeth mischiefe, as a Smith doth Iron, hammers it out: and the thoughts are the materialls of this frowardnesse in us; upon all the things which are presented to us, the minde begets some thoughts, imaginations on them; and as lusts, so thoughts are conceived, James 1. Isay 59. 4. They conceive mischiefe, and bring forth iniquitie, and hatch*

hatch Cockatrice egges, and  
weave Spiders webbes. And  
verse 7. hee instanceth in  
thoughts of iniquity, be-  
cause our thoughts are  
spunne out of our owne  
hearts, are egges of our  
owne laying, though the  
things presented to us bee  
from without.

And this I adde to sever  
them from such *thoughts*  
as are *injected*, and cast in,  
onely from without.  
which are children of an-  
others begetting, and of-  
ten laid out of doores:  
such as are blasphemous  
thoughts cast in by *Satan*,  
wherein if the soule bee  
merely passive, (as the  
word *Buffeting* implies,  
2 Cor. 12.7.) they are none  
of

of your thoughts, but his; wherein a man is but as one in a roome with another, where he heares another sweare and curse, but cannot get out from him; such thoughts, if they bee onely *from without*, defile not a man. For *nothing defiles a man, but what comes from within*, Matth. 15.18,19. or which the heart hath begotten upon it by the devil, as thoughts of uncleanness, &c. Wherein though he be the father, yet the heart is the mother and wombe; and therfore accordingly they affect the heart, as naturall children doe, and by that wee may distinguish them from the other, namely,

B when

when we have a soft heart, an inward love unto them, so that our hearts doe kisse the childe, then they are our *thoughts*, or else when the heart broods upon these egges, then they are our *thoughts*, though they come from without.

Though this is to bee added, that even those thoughts, wherein the soule is passive, and which Satan casts in, which wee do no wayes owne, wherein hee *ravisheth* the heart, rather than *begets* them on us, (if there bee not any consent to them in us, then it is but a *Rape*, as in law it is not) I yeeld those thoughts are punishments often of neglect of our

our thoughts, and of our suffering them to wander ; as *Dinah*, because she went cunningly out, *to view the Daughters of the land*, was taken and ravish't, though against her will : yet it was a punishment of her curiosity : or else they are the punishment of the neglect of good motions of the spirit ; which resisting, *we thereby grieve him*, and so he deales with us, as wee with our children, suffers us to bee scared with bug-beares, and to bee grieved by *Satan*, that wee may learne what it is to neglect him, and harbour vanity. Lastly , I adde, which the minde, *in and by it selfe*, or by the helpe of

fancy, thus begets and entertaines, because there are no thoughts or like-nesses of things at any time in our fancies, but at the same time they are in the understanding also reflected unto it: As when two Looking-glasses are placed opposite and nigh each to other, looke what species appeares in the one, doe also in the other.

Secondly, let us see what *vanity* is, take it in all the acceptations of it; It is true of our *thoughts* that they are *vaine*.

1. It is taken for *unprofitableness*. So *Eccles.1.2,3.* *All is vanitie*, because there is no profit in them under

*under the Sunne, such are our thoughts by nature, the wisest of them will not stand us in any stead in time of need, in time of temptation, distresse of conscience, day of death or Judgement, 1 Corin. 2.6.*

*All the wisedome of the wise comes to nought, Pro. 10.20. The heart of the wicked is little worth, not a penny for them all, whereas the thoughts of a godly man are his treasure: Out of the good treasure of his heart, hee brings them forth. He mints them, and they are laid up as his riches. Psal. 138. 17. How pretious are they? he there speakes of our thoughts of*

God, as the object of them  
thy thoughts, that is, ( of  
thee ) are precious.

2. *Vanitie* is taken for  
lightnesse. *Lighter than  
vanity* is a phrase used,  
*Psal. 62. 9.* and whom is it  
spoken of? *of men*, and if  
any thing in them be *ligh-  
ter* than other, it is their  
*thoughts* which swim in  
the uppermost parts, float  
at the top, is as the scum  
of the heart ; when all the  
best and wisest, and dee-  
pest, and solidest *thoughts*  
in *Balthazar* a Prince,  
were weighed, they were  
found too light, *Dan. 5. 17.*

3. *Vanity* is put for *fol-  
ly*. So *Prov. 12. 11.* *Vaine  
men*, is made all one with  
men *void of understand-  
ing*.

ding. Such are our thoughts among other evils which are said to come *out of the heart*, *Mark. 7.22.* *αρρωών* is reckoned as one, *foolishnesse*, that is, thoughts that are such as *mad men* have, and *fooles*, nothing to the purpose, of which there can bee made no use, which a man knowes not whence they should come, nor whither they would, *without dependance*.

4. It is put for *Inconstancy*, and *frailty*, therefore *vanity* and a *shadow* are made *Synonomaes*, *Psal.*

144.4. such are our thoughts, flitting and perishing, as bubbles, *Pf.146.4* *All their thoughts perish.*

Lastly, they are *vaine*, that is, indeed, *wicked* and *sinfull*; *vanity* in the Text here, is *yoaked* with *wickedness*: and *vaine men*, and *sonnes of Belial* are all one, 2 Chron. 13. 17. And such are our thoughts by nature: Prov. 24. 9. *The thought of foolishnesse is sinne*. And therefore a man is to bee humbled for a *proud thought*, Prov. 30. 32. For so *laying band* on the mouth is taken, as Job 39. 37. for being *wile* in a mans owne eyes.

And because this is the sense I chiefly must insist on, in handling the *vanity* of the thoughts, and also men usually thinke that thoughts are free; I will there-

therefore prove this to you, which is the onely Doctrine raised, that *Thoughts are sinnes.*

1. The *Law judgeth them, Hebr. 4. 12.* rebukes a man for them, *1 Cor. 14. 25.* and therefore they are transgressions of the Law: and so also did Christ rebuke the Pharisees for their ill thoughts, *Mat. 9. 4.* which argues the excellency of the Law, that reacheth thoughts.

2. Because they are *Capable of pardon*, and must be pardoned, or wee cannot be saved, *Acts 8. 22.* which argues the multitudes of Gods compassions, seeing thoughts are so infinite.

3. They are to bee repented of, yea repentance is expressed, as to begin at them. So *Esay 55.7.* *Let the unrighteous man forsake his thoughts;* and a man is never truely and throughly wrought on, (as *2 Cor. 10. 4,5.*) *till every thought be brought into obedience;* which argues that they are naturally rebellious, and contrary to grace. And this also argueth the *Power of grace,* which is able to rule and to subdue so great an Army as our thoughts are, and command them all, as one day it will doe, when wee are perfectly holy.

4. *They defile the man:* which nothing defiles but sinne,

finne, Matt. 15.15, 16, 17.  
Out of the heart proceed e-  
vill thoughts, these defile  
the man.

5. They are an abomi-  
nation to the Lord, who  
hates nothing but sinne,  
and whose pure eyes can en-  
dure to behold no iniquity,  
Prov. 15.16. as good Me-  
ditations are acceptable,  
Psal. 25. ult. so, by the rule  
of contrary, bad are abo-  
minable.

6. They hinder all good  
wee should doe, and spoile  
our best performances.  
Vaine thoughts draw the  
heart away in them, that  
when a man should draw  
nigh to God, his Heart, by  
reason of his thoughts, is  
farre off from him, Esay

29. 16. *A mans heart goes after his covetousness*, when hee should heare, as the Prophet speakes, because his thoughts thus run. Now nothing else but sinne could separate, and what doth estrange us from God, is sinne, and enmity to him.

7. Our thoughts are the first motioners of all the evill in us. For they make the motion, and also bring the heart and object together; are panders to our lusts, hold up the object, till the heart hath plaid the adulterer with it, and committed folly, so in speculative uncleanlines, & in other lusts, they hold up the images of those gods,

gods they create, which the heart falls downe and worships; they present credit, riches, beauty, till the heart hath worshipt them, and this when the things themselves are absent.

To come now to those *Particulars* wherein this *vanity* of the *thinking*, *meditating* power of the minde consists.

First, I will discover it in regard of *thinking what is good*, how unable and loth, &c. it is to good thoughts; and secondly, in regard of the *readiness* of it to *think of evill and vaine things*.

For the first, first in a *want of ability* ordinarily, and naturally to raise and

extract holy and usefull considerations & thoughts from all ordinary occurrences, and occasions; which the minde, so farre as it is sanctified, is apt unto. A heart sanctified, and in whose affections true grace is enkindled, out of all Gods dealings with him, out of the things he sees and heares, out of all the objects are put into the thoughts he distilleth holy, and sweet, and usefull meditations: and it naturally doth it, and ordinarily doth it, so farre as it is sanctified. So our Saviour Christ, all speeches of others which hee heard, all accidents and occurrences did still raise and occasion in

in him heavenly meditations, as wee may see throughout the whole Gospels: when he came by a well, hee speakes of the *Water of life*, *John 4, 8*. Many instances raight be given; *He* in his thoughts translated the book of the creatures, into the booke of grace, and so did *Adams* heart in innocency: his *Philosophy* might be truely termed *Divinity*, because hee saw God in all; all raiſed up his heart to thankfulness and praise: So now in like manner our mindes, so farre as they are sanctified, will doe. As the *Philosophers-stone* turns all Metals into Gold; As the Bee sucks honey out  
of

of every flower, and a good stomach sucks out some sweet and wholesome nourishment out of what it takes unto it selfe: so doth a holy heart, so farre as sanctified, convert and digest all into spiritual usefull thoughts; this you may see, *Psalme 107. ult.* That *Psalme* gives many instances of Gods providence, and wonderfull works which hee doth for the sonnes of men; as deliverances by Sea, where men see his wonders: delivrance to Captives, &c. and still the foot of the Song is, *Oh that men would therefore praise the Lord for the wonderfull workes hee doth for the sonnes*

sonnes of men. Now after al these instances, hee concludes, that though others passe over such occurrences with ordinarie slight thoughts, yet sayes hee, *The righteous shall see it, and rejoyce*: that is, extract comfortable thoughts out of all, which shall be matter of joy, and *who so is wise will observe those things*, that is, makes holy observations out of all these, and out of a principle of wisdome hee understands Gods goodness in all, and so his heart is raised to thoughts of praise, and thankfullnesse, and obedience. Now compare with this the 92. Psalme made for the Sabbath

bath ( when in imitation of God, who that day viewed his works, wee are, on our *Lords day*, still to raise holy praisefull thoughts out of them to his glory, which hee that penned that *Psalme* then did, vers. 1. and 2. and ) ver. 5. *How great are thy workes, &c!* *A brutish man knowes not, nor will a foole understand this:* that is, hee being a beast, and having no sanctified principle of wisdom in him, lookest no further than a beast into all the works of God, and occurrences of things; lookest on all blessings as things provided for mans delight by God: but hee extracts scldome holy spirituall

rituall and usefull thoughts out of all, he wants the art of doing it.

If injuries be offered us by others, what doe our thoughts distill out of those wrongs, but thoughts of revenge? we meditate how to requite it againe. But see how naturally *Davids* mind distills other thoughts of *Shemeis* cursing, 2 *Sam.*

16. 11. *God hath bidden him*, and it may prove a good signe of Gods favor. *God may requite good for it.* When we see judgements befall others, severe thoughts of censure our mindes are apt to raise against our brother, as *Jobs* friends did. But a godly man

man whose minde is much  
sanctified, raiseth other  
thoughts out of it, *Prov.*  
21. 22. *Wisely consideres, &c.*

So when outward mer-  
cies befall us, the next  
thoughts wee are apt to  
have, is to project ease by  
our wealth, thou *hast goods*  
*for many yeares*: and when  
judgements befall us, wee  
are apt to be fill'd with  
thoughts of complaint,  
and feates, and cares how  
to wende out againe. But  
what were the first  
thoughts *Job* had, upon  
the newes of the losse of  
all? *God hath given, and*  
*the Lord hath taken, blessed*  
*be the Lord for all.*

Such thoughts as these  
(which

(which all opportunities  
hint unto) a good heart is  
apprehensive of, and doth  
naturally raise for its owne  
use. So farre *Barren* as  
our thoughts are, so farre  
*vaine*.

Secondly, the *vanitie*,  
and *sinfulnesse* of the  
minde appeares in a *loath-*  
*nesse* to *entertaine holy*  
*thoughts*, to begin to set it  
selfe to thinke of God,  
and the things belonging  
unto our peace ; even as  
loath they are to this as  
Schoole-boyes are to goe  
to their Books, or to busie  
their mindes about their  
lessons, their heads being  
full of play ; so loath are  
our mindes to enter into  
serious considerations, in-  
to

to sad solemne thoughts of God, or death, &c. Men are as loath to thinke of death, as theeves of the execution ; or to thinke of God, as they are of their Judge. So to goo over their owne actions, in a review of them, and read the blurd writing of their hearts, and to *commune with them*, at night in the end of the day, (as David did, *Psalm. 119.59.*) men are as loath to doe this, as Schoole-boyes are to perse their lessons, and the false Latins they have made, *Job 21.* Depart from us (say they in *Job*) unto God, from their thoughts they meant it, for it follows, *we desire not the*

*the knowledge of thy wayes.*  
They would not think of him, or know them by their good wills; and therefore our mindes, like a bad stomack, are nauseated with the very scent of good things, and soone casts them up againe, *Rom. 1. 28.* *They like not to retaine the knowledge of God:* let us goe and try to wind up our soules, at any time, to holy meditations, to thinke of what we have heard, or what wee have done, or what is our duty to doe, and wee shall finde our minds, like the peggs of an Instrument, slip betweene our fingers, as we are a winding them up, and to fall downe suddenly againe,

gaine, ere we are aware of it: yea you shall finde, that your mindes will labour to shun what may occasion such thoughts; even as men goe out of the way, when they see they must meet with one they are loath to speake withall; yea men dare not be alone, for feare such thoughts should returne upon them. The best shall finde a gladnesse, for an excuse, by other occasions to knocke off their thoughts from what is good: whereas in thinking of vaine earthly things, we think the time passeth too fast, clocks strike too soone, hours passe away ere wee are aware of it.

Third-

Thirdly, the *vanity* and *sinfulnesse* of the minde appeares in the godly, that though they entertaine good thoughts, yet the minde is not, will not bee *long intent* on them. Some things there are, which wee are, and can be intent upon, and accordingly dwell long upon them, and therefore in *Job 17. 11.* *The thoughts* are called the *possessions of the heart*, (so 'tis in the originall, and noted in the margin) such thoughts as are pleasing, the heart dwells on them; yea so intent are wee often, that they hinder our sleepe: as 'tis said of wicked men, *They cannot sleepe for multitude*

C      multitude

titude of thoughts, Eccles. 5.12. So, to devise froward things, Solomon sayes, Prover. 16. 30. That a man shutes his eyes, that is, is exceeding attentive, porerth upon his plots; for so a man doth use to do, to shut his eycs when hee would be intent, and therefore it is so expressed. But now let the minde be occupied and busied about good things, and things belonging to our peace, how unsteady is it: which things should yet draw out the intention of the minde: For the more excellent the object is, the stronger our intention should bee. God is the most glorious object our mindes can fasten

sten on, the most alluring. The thought of whom therefore should swallow up all other, as not worthy to bee seene the same day with him: But I apeale to all your experiences, if your thoughts of him be not most unsteady, and are, ( that I may so compare it ) as when wee looke upon a Starre throw an Optique glasse, held with a palsie shaking hand: It is long ere wee can bring our mindes to have ken of him, to place our eyes upon him, and when wee have, how doe our hands shake, and so loose sight ever and anon? So whilst wee are in never so serious talke with him,

when all things else should stand without, and not dare to offer entrance, till wee have done with him, yet how many chinkes are there in the heart, at which other thoughts come in? and our minds leave God, and follow them, and goe after our covetousnesse, our credit, &c. as the Prophets phrase is, *Ezech. 33.* So when wee are hearing the Word, how do our minds ever and anon runne out of the Church, and come againe, and so doe not heare halfe that is said? So when wee are at our callings, which God bids us to bee conversant about with all our might, *Eccles. 9.10.* yet our minds like

like idle truants, or negligent servants, though sent about never so serious a businesse, yet goe out of the way to see any sport, runne after the Hares that crosse the way, follow after Butter-flies that buzz about us.

And so when wee come to pray, Christ bids *watch to prayer, Mark. 13.33.* that is, as if wee were at every dore to place a guard that none come in and disturbance knock us off. But how oft doth the heart nod, and fall asleepe, and runne into another world, as men in dreames doe? Yea so naturall are distractions to us, when wee are busied about holy duties, that as

excrements come from men, when very weak and sicke, ere they are aware of it; so doe worldly thoughts from us, and we are carried out of that stremme of good our mind was running in, into some by-creek ere we are aware of it.

Fourthly, the vanity of the minde appeares, in regard of *good* things, that if it doth thinke of them, yet it doth it *unseasonably*. It is with your thoughts as with your speeches, their goodness lies in their placing and order, *Prov. 25. 11.* *If filly spoken,* they are *as Apples of Gold in pictures of silver.* And as a man is to bring forth actions,

actions, so thoughts in *due season*; as those fruits, so these buds should come out in *season*, *Psalm. 1*. Now the vanity of the minde appears in thinking of some good things, sometimes unseasonably; when you are praying, you should not onely have no worldly thoughts come in, but no other than praying thoughts. But then haply some notions of, or for a Sermon will come readily in: so in hearing, a man shall often have good thoughts that are heterogeneall to the thing in hand; So when a man is falling downe to prayer, looke what thing a man had forgotten, when it

should have bee[n] thought of, will then come in, or what will affect a man much comes in to divert him. This *misplacing* of *thoughts* (suppose they bee good) is yet from a vanity of the minde; did those thoughts come at another time, they should be welcome: we finde our minds ready to spend thoughts about any thing, rather than what God at present calls unto. When we goe to a Sermon, we finde we could then spend our thoughts more willingly about reading; or happily searching our hearts; unto which at another time, when called to it, wee should be most unwilling to

to. We could bee content to run wild over the fields of meditations and miscellanious thoughts, though about good, rather than to bee tied to that taske, and kept in one set path.

In Adam and Christ no thought was misplaced, but though they were as many as the Starres, yet they marched in their courses, and kept their ranks. But ours as Meteors, dance up and dowye in us. And this disorder is a vanity and sinne, bee the thought materially never so good. Not every one that hath the best part must therefore first step up the Stage to Act, but take his right cue. In

Printing, let the letters bee never so faire, yet if not placed in their order, and rightly composed, they marre the sense. Souldiers upon no tyme should breake their ranks: so nor should our thoughts, *Prov. 16. 3.* There is a promise to a *Righteous man*, that (as some reade it) *his thoughts shall be ordered.*

And so much for the first part, *The privative sinfulnesse in our thoughts, in respect of what is good.*

Now secondly, I proceed to discover that *positive vanity*, which appeareth in our thoughts; in regard of *what is evill.* And here it is not to bee expected, nor indeed can it

it bee performed by any man, to reckon up the severall particularities of all those vaine thoughts which run through mans heart; I will insist onely on some more generall discoveries, to which particulars may be reduced, for a taste of the rest.

First, the *vanitie* of them discovers it selfe, in that which Christ calls, *Mark.7.22. ἀρεβόν foolishnes*: that is, such thoughts as mad men have, and fooles; which *foolishnesse* is seene, both in that unsetled wantonnesse and *unstayednesse* of the minde in thinking, that like quick-silver it cannot fixe, but as *Solomon sayes, Prov.*

17. 24. *A fooles eyes are  
in the ends of the earth, are  
garish, and runne up and  
downe from one end of  
the earth to the other,  
shooting and streaming, as  
those Meteors you see  
sometimes in the ayre.  
And though indeed the  
minde of man is nimble  
and able thus to run from  
one end of the earth to  
another, ( which is its  
strength and excellency )  
yet God would not have  
this strength and nimble-  
nesse, and metall-spirit in  
curveting and tumbling,  
( as I may call it ) but in  
steady directing all our  
thoughts straight on to his  
glory, our owne salvati-  
on, and the good of o-  
thers;*

thers; he gave it this nimblenesse to turne away from evill, and the first appearance of it. As we are to walke in Gods wayes hee calls us to, so every thought, as well as every action is a step: and therefore ought to bee steady, *Make straight steps to your feete,* sayes the Apostle, *Hebrews 12. 13.* turning not to the right hand, nor to the left, untill we come to the journeys end of that businesse wee are to think of. But our thoughts, at best, are as wanton Spaniels, who though indeed they goe with, and accompany their Master, and come to their journeys end with him in the end, yet

yet doe runne after every  
Bird, and wildly pursue  
every flock of sheepe they  
see. This unsteadinesse, it  
ariseth from the like curse  
on the minde of Man, as  
was on Caine, that it being  
driven from the presence of  
the Lord, it proves a vag-  
bond, and so mens eyes are  
in the ends of the earth.

This foolishnesse or  
*appetitum* is also seene in  
that *Independence* in our  
thoughts; they hanging  
oft together as ropes of  
sand; this wee see more e-  
vidently in dreames: And  
not onely then, but when  
awake also, and *that*, when  
we would set our selves to  
be most serious, how doe  
our thoughts jangle and  
ring

ring back-ward: and as wanton Boyes, when they take pens in their hands, scribble broken words that have no dependence. Thus doe our thoughts: and if you would but looke over the copies thereof, which you write continually, you would finde as much non-sense in your thoughts, as you find in mad mens speeches. This madnesse and distemper is in the minde since the fall(though it appeares not in our words, because wee are wiser) that if notes were taken of our thoughts, we should finde thoughts so vagrant, that wee know not how they come in, nor whence they came,

came, nor whither they would. But as God doth all things in weight, number, and measure, so doth his Image in us, so farre as it is renewed: And, by reason of these two, the *folly*, *unsettlednesse*, and *independence* of our thoughts, wee bring our thoughts often to no issue, to no perfection, but wil-der away our time *in thinking* (as you use to say) *of nothing*; and as *Seneca* sayes of mens *lives*, as of Ships that are tost up and downe at Sea, it may bee said they have beeene *tossed much*, but *sayled nothing*; The like in this respect may bee said of the thoughts: Or as when men

men make imperfect dashes, and write non-sense, *They are said to scribble, they doe not write*: So, in these follies and independencies, wee wilder and *lose our selves, wee doe not thinke.*

But 2. on the contrary if any *strong lust*, or violent passion be up, then our thoughts are *too fixed and intent*, and run in so farre into such sinfull objects, that they cannot bee pulled out againe, or any way diverted or taken off: which is another vanity. For our thoughts and our understanding part was ordained to moderate, allay, and coole, and take off our passions, when they are a pla-

playing over, to rule and governe them. But now our thoughts are themselves subjected to our affections, and like fuel put under them, doe but make them boile the more. And although our thoughts do first stirre up our feares, joyes, desires, &c. yet these being stirred up once, chaine, and fixe, and hold our thoughts to those objects, so as wee cannot loosen them again. Therefore sayes Christ to his Disciples, *Why are you troubled, and why doe thoughts arise in your hearts*: For perturbations in the affections cause thoughts like fumes and vapours to ascend. Thus if

if a *passion* of feare bee up,  
how doth it conjure up  
multitudes of ghostly  
thoughts which wee can-  
not conjure downe againe,  
nor hide our eyes from?  
But which haunt us, and  
follow us up and downe,  
where ever wee goe, so as  
a man runnes away pursu-  
ed by his owne thoughts,  
*the heart then meditates on*  
*teravour* : *As I say 33.18.* So  
when sorrow is up, how  
doth it make us study the  
crosse that lights upon us?  
which to forget, would  
be an ease unto the minde.  
But a mans passions makes  
his thoughts to con it, and  
to say it by heart, over  
and over againe, as if it  
would not have us forget  
it.

it. So when *love* and *desire* is up, bee the thing what it will, wee are taken with, as preferment, credit, beauty, riches, it sets our thoughts aworke to view the thing all over, from top to toe ( as wee say ) to observe every part and circumstance, that doth make it amiable unto us : as if a picture were to bee drawn of it. So when *joy* is up, wee view the thing we rejoice in, and reade it over and over, as wee doe a Booke wee like, and wee marke every tittle, wee are punctuall in it ; yea so inordinate are wee herein, as often we cannot sleepe for thinking on them. *Eccles.* 5. 12. *Abundance of riches will*

will not suffer him to sleepe, for the multitude of thoughts in his head, speakeing of a man who is covetous; how doe thoughts trouble the Belshazzers and Nebuchadonezers of the world: Dan. 4. 19. so Proverbs 4. 16. They sleepe not unlesse they have done mischiefe; if their desires remaine unsatisfied, they doe disturbe their thoughts, like froward children by their crying; so as, often, these which men count free (as the most doe thoughts) doe prove the greatest bondage and torment in the earth unto them, and doe hinder sleepe, the nurse of nature, eate out, and live upon

upon the heart that bred them, weary the spirits, that when a man shall say (as Job 7. 13.) *My bed shall comfort mee, by putting a parenthesis to his thoughts, and sad discourses, which hee hath when awake, yet then they haunt a man; and as vers. 14. terrifie him.* A man cannot lay them aside as he doth his cloake: and when men die they will follow them to hell, and torment them worse there; your thoughts are one of the greatest executioners there, even the *worme that dies not.*

Thirdly, the *vanity* of the minde appeares in *curiosity*, a longing and itching

ing to bee fed with, and to know (and then delighting to thinke of ) things that do not at all concerne us. Take an experiment of this in Schollers (whose chiefe worke lies in this shop) how many precious thoughts are spent this way : as in curiositie of knowledge, as appeares by those the Apostle often rebukes, that affect, as *1 Tim.6. 4,20.* *oppositions of science falsely so called* curiosities of knowledge of things they have not seen. So *Coloss. 2.* and *1 Tim.4. 7.* hee calls such issues of mens braines, they dote on, *old wives fables* : because as fables please old wives, so doe these

these their mindes, and of that itch they have in them, even as women with child, in their longings, content not themselves with what the place affords, or the season, with what may be had ; but often long after some unheard of rarity, far fetcht, or, it may bee, not at all to bee had : Thus men not contenting themselves with the wonders of God discovered in the depth of his Word and Workes, they will launch into another Sea, and world of their owne making, and there they saile with pleasure, as many of the Schoole-men did in some of their speculations, spen-

spending their pretious wits in framing curious webs out of their owne bowels.

Take another instance also in others, who have leisure and parts to reade much, they should ballast their hearts with the Word, and take in those more pretious words of wisdome and sound knowledge to profit themselves and others, and to build up their owne soules, and whereby they may bee enabled to serve their Countrey: but now what doe their curious fancies carry them unto, to bee versed in, but Play-books, jearing Pasquils, Roman-  
ses, fained stayes, which

D are

are the curious needle-worke of idle braines, so as they load their heads with *Apes and Peacockes feathers*, in stead of pearles and precious stones; so as a man may say as *Solomon Prover. 15. 14.* The heart of him that hath understanding seeketh knowledge, but the mouth of fooles feeds on foolishnesse. Foolish discourses please their eares and eyes to reade; all these being but purveyors (as it were) for food, for the thoughts, like Camelions men live on ayre and winde.

To leave them, how doe others out of meere curiositie to know and please their thoughts, listen

sten after all the news that flies up and downe the world, scum all the froth that floats in foolish mens mouths, and please themselves onely with talking, thinking, and hearing of it.

I do not condemne all herein: some their ends are good, and they can make use of it, and doe as *Nehemiah* did, who inquired how things went at *Ierusalem*, to rejoice with Gods people, and mourne with them, and pray for them, and to know how to fashion their prayers accordingly. But I condemne that curious itch that is in men, when it is done, but meerly to please

D 2      their

their fancies, which is much delighted with new things, though they concerne us not; such the *Athenians were, Acts 17.*

21. How doe some men long all the weeke, till they heare events and issues, and make it a great part of the happynesse of their lives, to study the state more than their own hearts, and affaires of their callings: who take actions of State as their text to study the meaning of, and to preach on where-ever they come. I speake of those that yet lay not to heart the miseries of the Church of Christ, nor helpe them with their prayers, if at any time

time they happen.

The like curiosity is seene in many, in desiring to know the secrets of other men, which yet would doe them no good to know, and who doe study mens actions and ends, not to reforme, or doe good to them, but to know them, and think and muse thereof, when alone, with pleasure ; this is curiosity, and properly a vanity of the thinking power, which it mainly pleafeth ; and is indeed a great sin, when much of mens most pleasing thoughts are spent on things concerne them not. For the things we ought to know, and which doe concerne

us, are enough to take up all our thoughts alone, neither shall wee have any to spare: and thoughts are pretious things, the immediate fruits and buds of an immortall nature; and God hath given us power to coyne them, to lay them out in things concerne our owne good, and of our neighbours, and his owne glory; and thus not to spend them is the greatest waste in the world; examine what Corrie you put in to grind, for God ought to have toll of all. *Prover. 24. 8.*  
*Hee that deviseth evill shall be called a mischievous person, not alwayes hee that doth a mischievous action,*

on, but that deviseth it: and verse 9. he aggravates it, à *minori*, for every thought is sinne, then a combination and confiracy of wicked thoughts is much more.

But 4. there is a worse vanity than this, and that is that intimated Rom. 13. ult. *Taking thought to fulfill the lusts of the flesh, adūtū māndū* [To make projects for it.] For thoughts are the Caterers for our lusts, and lay in all their provision, they are they that looke out where the best markets are, the best opportunities for sinning in any kind, the best bargaines for credit, for preferment, for riches, &c.

For example, would a man rise? his thoughts study the art of it, men frame their owne ladder to climbe withall, invent wayes how to doe it, though often it proves as to *Haman* their owne Gallows. Would they bee rich? what doe they study? even all cheats and tricks on the Cards, (as I may so speake) that is, all the cunning tricks of the world, all the wayes of oppressing, defrauding, and going beyond their brethren, so to pack things in all their dealings, that they themselves shall bee the winners, and those that deale with them, the losers, *Isay 32. 7.* It is said,

said, that the Instruments of the churlish are evill, and hee deviseth wicked devices to destroy the poore : would a man undermine his opposite, as one that stands in his light, and who hinder his credit? he'll digge and fall a pioning, with his thoughts, his engins, in the night, digge a pit, as the Scripture phrase is, and dig deepe to hide his counsell, to blow him up in the end, and so as hee shall not know who hurt him ; and this is worse than all the former, this studied artificall villanie. The more devising there is in sinne, the worse: therefore the fact about *Vriah*, not so much that of *Bathsheba*,

D 5      is

is objected against David, because hee used art in it; hee souke thought for it, but in the matter of Bathsheba, thoughts souke him.

Fiftly, the fift is the representing or acting oversimes, in our thoughts and imaginations, personating those pleasures by imagination, which at present wee enjoy not really, faining and imagining our selves to act those sinfull practises wee have not opportunity outwardly to performe: *speculative wickednesse* Divines doe call it, which to be in the power of imagination to doe, is evident to you by your dreames; when

when fancy playes its part most, and to allude to what the Prophet sayes, makes us beleive wee are when we are an hungry, to drinke when our soules are thirsty. *Isay 29. 8.* But I meane not to speake of the power and corruption of it, as in our dreames: it were well if, as the Apostle speakes of *Drunkennesse*, that this speculative wickednesse were onely in the night: But corrupt and distempered affecti-  
ons doe cast men into such dreames in the day, and when they are awake, there are then ( to borrow the Apostles expression ) *filthy dreames*, *Jude 8.* that defile the flesh, even when

when awake: when, their lusts wanting worke, their fancie erects to them a stage, and they set their imaginations and thoughts a worke to entertaine their filthy and impure desires, with shewes and playes of their owne making, and so *reason* and the intention of their mindes, sit as spectators all the while to view with pleasure, till their thoughts inwardly act over their owne uncleane desires, ambitious projects, or what ever else they have a minde unto.

So *vaine* and empty is the heart of man become, so *impatient* are our desires and lusts of interruption in their pleasures, so *sinfull*

full and corrupt.

First, vaine and empty it appeares to bee in this; for take all the pleasures of sinne, when they are never so fully, solidly, really, and substantially enjoyed, they are but shadows, a meere outside and figure, as the Apostle calls the world. It is opinion of imagination that casts that varnish of goodnesse on them, which is not truly in them. So *Felix* and *Bernices* pompe is termed *μανεγερτοια*; but now this speculative enjoying of them onely in imagination, (which many mens hearts take so much pleasure in,) the pleasing our selves in the bare thoughts

thoughts and imaginati-  
ons of them, this is but a  
shadow of these shadows,  
that the soule should Ixion-  
like embrace and committe  
adultery with clouds on-  
ly; this is a vanitie be-  
yond all other vanities,  
that maketh us vainer than  
other creatures, who,  
though subject to vanity,  
yet not to such as this.

Secondly, it argues our  
desires to be impatient, to  
bee detained from, or in-  
terrupted of their plea-  
sures. When the soule  
shall bee found so greedy,  
that when the heart is de-  
barred or sequestred from  
those things it desires, and  
wants meanes or opportu-  
nities to act its lusts, as not  
being

being to stay, it will at least enjoy them in imagination, and in the *interim*, set fancie to entertaine the minde with empty pictures of them drawne in its owne thoughts.

3. Thus they appeare also to bee exceeding sinfull and corrupt; an *oward* act of sinne, it is but as an act of *whoredome* with the creature, when *really* enjoyed: But this is *Incest*, when we defile our soules and spirits with these imaginations and likenesses which are begotten in our own fancies, being the children of our owne hearts.

And yet (my brethren) such speculative enjoying  
of

of pleasures, and acting o-  
ver of sinnes the minde of  
man is full of, as will ap-  
peare in many particu-  
lars.

First, looke what com-  
forts men have *at present*  
in their possession, and at  
command; what *excellen-  
cies* or endowments, men  
love to be alone to study,  
and thinke of them, and  
when they are sequestred  
from the present use of  
them, yet they will then  
bee againe and againe re-  
counting and casting of  
them up, taking a survey  
of their happiness in them,  
applauding their owne  
hearts in their conditions.  
And as rich men, that love  
money, love to be looking  
on

on it, and telling it over ; so do men to be summing up their comforts and priviledges they enjoy , which others want ; as, how rich they are , how great, how they excell others in parts and gifts , &c. Oh how much of that precious sand of our thoughts runne out this way ! Thus he in the Go-spell, hee keepes an audit in his heart ; *Soule ( saith he ) thou hast goods laid up for many yeares.* So *Ha-man*, *Ester. 5.11.* takes an Inventory of his honours and goods, he talkes of all the glory of his riches, and all the things wherein the King had promoted him. So *Nebuchadnezar*, *Dan.*

4.30. as it may seeme, hee  
was alone walking and  
talking to himselfe, like a  
foole, saying to himselfe ;  
*Is not this the great Babell  
which I have built by the  
might of my power, for  
the glory of my Ma-  
jesty.*

And as thus upon their  
comforts, so also upon  
their excellencies, as their  
learning, wisdome, parts,  
&c. Men love to stand  
looking upon these in the  
glasse of their owne spe-  
culation, as faire fa-  
ces love to looke often  
and long in Looking-  
glasses: which, as it ariseth  
from that selfe-flattery is  
in men; so also that they  
might keepe their happi-  
nessse

nesse still fresh and continued in their eye ; which thoughts, when they raise not up the heart to thankefulness to God, and are not used to that end, but are bellows of pride; they are vaine and abominable in the eyes of God, as appeares by Gods dealing with those fore-mentioned; for to the one hee sayes, *Thou fool, this night;* the other, *whilst the word was in his mouth,* (giving him no longer warning) hee strikes with madnesse and brutishnesse : and *Ham-* man, you know, was like a *Wall* that doth *swell* before it *breakes*, and falls to *ruine* and *decay*.

Secondly, *this specula-  
tive*

tive enjoying of pleasures, and acting over sinnes thus in fancy, doth appeare in regard of *things to come*; which when wee have in view, or any hopes of mens thoughts goe forth afore to meet them, with how much contentment doe mens thoughts entertaine their desires, with vaine promisings and ex-pe&ctations afore-hand of their pleasures, that are in view and in possibility to bee enjoyed. So they in *Esay* wind up their hearts to a higher pin of jollity in the midst of their cups, in that their hearts thought and promised them, *To morrow shall bee as to day, and much more abun-*

abundant, *Isay 56. 12.* So they, *Iames 4. 13.* they say with themselves, *Wee will goe to such a City, and continue there a yeare, and get gaine.* And the promise of this, and the thoughts of it afore-hand feeds them, and keepeſ up their hearts in comfort. When men rise in a morning, they begin to fore-thinke with much pleasure, what carnall pleasures they have the ad-vousion and promise of that day or weeke, as to goe to such company, and there bee merry ; to goe such a pleasant journey, enjoy satisfaction in such a lust, heare such newes, &c. And thus as godly men

men live by faith in Gods promises, *Hab. 2. 4.* *Isay 38. 16.* By these men live, and this is the spirit of my life, saith *Hezechiah*, even what God hath spoken, vers. 13. So doe carnall men live much upon the promises of their owne hearts and thoughts afore-hand, (for to this head of vaine thoughts, these vaine promisinges are to be reduced, *Psalm. 49. 11.* Their inward thought is, their houses shall continue for ever, and this thought pleaseth them:) what pleasure almost is there, which a man makes much account of, but hee acts it first over in private in his owne thoughts: and thus doe men

men foolishly take their owne words and promises, and so *befoole* themselves in the end, as *Jeremy speaks, Jerem. 17.* They take up before-hand in their thoughts upon trust, the pleasures they are to enjoy, even as spend-thrifts doe their rents, or Heires their revewns before they come of age to enjoy their lands, that when they come indeed to enjoy the pleasures they expected, either they prove but *dreames*, as *Isay 29. 6.* they finde their *soules empty*; or so much under their expectation, and so stale, as they have little in them, that there still proves

proves more in the imagination than in the thing, which ariseth from the vastnesse and greediness of mens desires, as the cause hereof; for that makes them swallow up all at once. So *Hab.2. Enlarging his desires as Hell, bee heapes up all Nations, swallows them up in his thoughts.* So an ambitious Scholler doth all preferments that are in his view.

Thirdly, this *speculative wickednesse* is exercised in like maner towards *things past*, in recalling namely, and reviving in our thoughts the pleasure of sinfull actions passed; when the minde runnes over

over the passages and circumstances of the same sins long since committed, with a new and fresh delight; when men raise up their dead actions long since buried, in the same likenesse they were transacted in, and parley with them, as the Witch & *Saul* did with Satan in *Samuels* likenesse. And whereas they should draw crosse lines over them, and blot them out through faith in Christs blood, they rather copy and write them over againe in their thoughts, with the same contentment. So an unclean person can study and view over every circumstance passed in such

E an

an act, with such a person committed ; so a vaine-glorious Scholler doth repeate in his thoughts an eminent performance of his, and all such passages therein as were most elegant. And thus men chew the cudd upon any speech of commendation uttered by others of them. And all this even as a good heart doth repeate good things heard or read, with the remembrance also of what quicknesse they had in such and such passages, and with what affections they were warmed, when they heard them ; or as a godly man recalls with comfort the actions of a well-past life, as *Hezechiah*

chiah did, *Lord I have*  
*walked before thee with a*  
*perfect heart;* and thereby  
doe also stirre and provoke  
their hearts to the like  
temper againe: So on the  
contrary, doe wicked men  
use to recall, and revive  
the pleasingest sinfull pas-  
sages in their lives, to suck  
a new sweetnesse out of  
them: Then which nothing  
argues more *hardnesse* and  
*wickednesse* of heart, or  
provokes God more. For,

First, it argues much  
*wickednesse* of heart, and  
such as when it is *ordinary*  
with the heart to doe thus,  
is not compatible with  
grace: for in the 6. of the  
*Romans, ver. 12.* the Apo-  
stle shewes that a good

heart useth to reape no such fruit of sinfull actions past, But what fruit had you of those things whereof yee are now ashamed? The Saints reap and distill nothing out of all those flowers, but shame and sorrow, and sad sighs: when *Ephraim* remembred his sinne, he was ashamed, & repented; and canst thou in thy thoughts, reap a new harvest and crop of pleasure out of them, again and againe?

Secondly, it argues much hardnesse of heart; nothing being more opposite to the truth and practice of repentance, the foundation of which is to call to mind the sinne with shame

shame and sorrow, and to recall it with much more griefe, than ever there was pleasure in the committing of it: and whose property is to *hate* the *appearance* of it, and to enflame the heart with *Zeale* and revenge against it. And thereby it provoketh God exceedingly, our hearts are thereby embrued in a new guilt, wee thereby stand to, and make good our former act: even so, by remembraunce it with pleasure, wee provoke God to remembraunce it with a new detestation of it, and so to send downe new plagues; who, if wee recall it with griefe, *would remember it no more*:

E 3                    we

wee shew wee take delight  
to rake in those wounds  
wee have given Christ al-  
ready ; to view *the sinnes of  
others* with pleasure, *Rom.  
1.ult.* is made more than to  
commit them : But much  
more to view and reviye  
our owne with a fresh de-  
light : and therefore know  
that how-ever you may  
take delight here to re-  
peat to your selves your  
old sins, yet that in Hell  
nothing will gall you  
more, than the remem-  
brance of them ; every  
circumstance in every sin  
will then be as a dagger at  
thy heart. This was the  
rich mans taske and study  
in Hell, to remember the  
good things hee had recei-  
ved,

ved, and his sins committed in the abuse of them. And if godly men here be made to possesse the sinnes of their youth with horrour, as *Job*, and to have them ever afore them, as *David*, how will wicked men bee continually affrighted with them in hell? whose punishment is in a great part set forth to us, by this *Psalme 50.20.* *I will set them in order before thee.*

Fourthly, the fourth thing wherein this *speculative vanity* appeares, is in acting sinnes upon meere imaginary suppositions men faigne, and contrive to themselves, and make a supposition to themselves

in their own thoughts, first of what *they would bee*, and then what *they would doe*. Men create fooles paradieses to themselves, and then walke up and downe in them ; as, if they had moncy enough, what pleasures they would have ; if they were in such places of preferment, how they would carry themselves. To allude to that *Absolom said*, 2 *Sam. 15.4.* *Oh if I were a Judge in the Land, I would doe this or that, &c.* doing this with a great deale of pleasure, almost as much as those that really enjoy them. This may well bee the meaning of that *Psalme 50.18.* where of the hypocrite ( who out-

outwardly abstaines from grosse sins) 'tis said, that bee consenteth with the thiefe, and partaketh with the adulterer, namely, in his heart and fancie, supposing himself with them, and so desires to bee doing what they doe. Thus take one who is naturally ambitious ( whom both nature, parts and education have all made, but a Bramble never to rule over the trees, and hath fixt in a lower sphere, as uncapable of rising higher or being greater, as the earth is of becoming a Starre in Heaven, yet) hee will take upon him in his owne heart, faining and sup-

E 5      fing

posing himselfe to bee, and then act the part of a great man there, erect a throne, and sit downe in it; and thinkes with himselfe what hee would doe, if a King or a great Man, &c. So take a man that is uncleane, but now growne old, and a *dry tree*, and so cannot ~~as his~~ lust as formerly, yet his thoughts shall supply what is wanting in his strength or opportunity. And he makes his owne heart both Bawd, Brothel-house, Whore, Whoremonger, and all: so a man that is naturally voluptuous, loves pleafures, but wants meanes to purchase them, yet his inclinations will please

please themselves with the thoughts of what mixture and composition of delights hee would have ; hee will set downe with himselfe his Bill of fare, how hee would have, if he might wish, his cup of pleasure mingled, what ingredients put into it. So a man that is revengefull, and yet wants a sting, yet he pleaseth himselfe with revengefull thoughts and wishes, and will be making invectives and railing dialogues against him , hee hates, when hee is not by. A man in love, in his fancy hee will court his Paramour though absent, he will by his imagination make her present, and so frame

frame solemn set speeches  
to her.

In a word, let mens inclinations and dispositions bee of what kinde so ever, and let the impossibilities and improbabilities be never so great of being what they desire ; yet in their fancies and thoughts they will discover themselves what they would be. *Totumque quod esse desiderant sibi apud semetipos cogitationibus depingunt*, men will bee drawing Maps of their desires, calculate their owne inclinations, cut out a condition of life which fills their hearts, and they please themselves withall : and there is no surer way to know a mans,

mans naturall inclination, than by this.

First, which yet first is as great a folly as any other, imitating children herein; for is it not childish to make clay pies, and puppets? what else are such fancies as these? and to bee as children acting the parts of Ladies and Mistresses, and yet such *childishnesse* is in mens hearts.

2. And secondly, a *vanitie* also, because a man sets his heart on *what is not*: the things themselves are not, if a man had them, *Prov. 23.5.* but to please themselves with suppositions is much worse.

Third-

Thirdly, this argues the greatest incontentation of minde that may bee, when men will in their owne thoughts put themselves into another condition than God ever ordained for them.

*Exe. I.*

**H**aving discovered the vanity of your thoughts and your estates thereby, bee humbled for them; This I ground upon, *Proverbs 30. 21.* where *Agur* teacheth us to humble our selves as well for thoughts as actions.

ons. If thou hast done foolishly in lifting up thy selfe, or if thou hast thought evill, lay thine hand upon thy mouth. Now as smiting upon the thigh is put for re-pentance and shame and sorrow in *Ephraim*, *Ierem.* 31.19. so is laying the hand upon the mouth put for greater and deeper humilia-tion, as arguing full conviction of ones guilt, *Rom.*

3. 19. Every mouth must be stopped. Having nothing to say, not to plead and excuse, that thoughts are free, and it is impossible to bee rid of them, &c, but as *Ezechiel*, 16.65. To remember and to bee confounded, and never to open thy mouth more: to bee vile, and not

not to answer againe, as *Job 39.27,28.* this is to lay thy hand on thy mouth, that is, to humble thy selfe.

And indeed there is much cause, for your thoughts they are the first begotten, and eldest sons of originall sin, and therefore the strength of it, as *Jacob* called *Reuben* the first-borne; yea also, and the *Parents* and begetters of all other finnes, their *brethren*; The first plotters and contrivers, and *Achitophels*, in all the treasons and rebellions of our hearts and lives; the bellows and incendiaries of all inordinate affections; the Panders to all our lusts, that *take thought to pro-*

provide for the satisfying of them ; the disturbers in all good duties, that interrupt and spoile and fly-blow all our prayers, that they stinke in the nostrills of God.

And if their hainousnesse will nothing move you, consider their number, for they are continually thus : which makes our sinnes to be in number more than the sands : the thoughts of *Solomons* heart were as the Sand, and so ours ; not a minute, but as many thoughts passe from us, as in a minute sands doe in an Houre-glasse. So that suppose, that taken severally, they be the smallest and least of your sinnes, yet

yet their multitude makes them more and heavier than all your other. Nothing smaller than a graine of *Sand*, but if there bee a heape of them, there is nothing *heavier*, *Iob 6.3.* *My griefe is heavier than the Sand.* Suppose they be in themselves, but as Farthing-tokens, in comparison of grosse defilements: yet because the Mint never lies still, sleeping nor wa-  
king, therefore they make up the greatest part of that treasure of wrath which wee are a laying up: and know that **God** will reckon every Farthing, and in thy punishment bate thee not one vaine thought. And that **God** lookes up-  
on

on our thoughts thus, see  
but the inditement he  
brings in against the old  
world ; which stands still  
upon record, *Gen. 6.* when  
he pronounced that heavy  
judgement of destroying  
the old world, doth he al-  
ledge their murthers, adul-  
teries, and grosse defile-  
ments chiefly as the cause?  
Their *thoughts* rather ;  
which because so many,  
and so *continually evill*,  
provoked him more than  
all their other sinnes. Goe  
downe therefore into thy  
heart, and consider them  
well, to humble thee, to  
make thee vile, and if in  
one roome such a treasure  
of wickednesse bee found  
laid up, what in all those  
other

other Chambers of the belly, as *Solomon* calls them: consider them to humble thee, but not for all this their multitude to discourage thee. For **God** hath *more thoughts of mercy* in him, than thou hast had of rebellion, *Psal. 40.5.* *Thy thoughts to us-ward*, (speaking of thoughts of mercy) are *more than can bee numbred*. Thou begannest but as yesterday to thinke thoughts of rebellion against him, but his thoughts of mercy have beene *from everlasting*, and reach to *everlasting*: and therefore in *Esay 55. vers. 7.* having made mention of *our thoughts*, let the *unrighteous man forsake his thoughts*, and

and hee will have mercy on him; because this objection of the multitude might come in to discourage men from hopes of mercy, therefore purposely hee addes, *hee will multiply to pardon*; and to assure us that hee hath thoughts of mercy to out-vie ours of sinne, hee addes, *for my thoughts exceed yours, as Heaven doth the earth.*

*Vſe 2.*

**L**et us make for ever conscience of them, so *Job* did, *Job 31.1.* I made a covenant with mine eyes, why should I thinke upon a Maide? *Solomon* gives in especiall charge, *above all keeping,*

keeping, keepe thy heart,  
*Prov.4.23.*

First, thou art to keepe the Lords day holy, thy selfe unspotted of the World. To keepe thy brother, to keepe all the Commandements, but above all to keepe thy heart, and in it, thy thoughts ; for this is the Great Commandement, because it extends it selfe ( as the foundation ) unto them all: for as in the same Commandement where murther is forbidden, a malicious thought is also, and so of the rest ; So in keeping the thoughts, thou virtually keepest all the Commandements : as originall sinne is said to bee forbidden in all the Commandements, so

so are thy thoughts taken  
order for in all.

Secondly, out of it are  
issues of life; thoughts and  
affections are the spring,  
speeches and actions the  
stremme: as are our  
thoughts, so are our affe-  
ctions; for these are the  
bellows: so also our pray-  
ers, so all, for they are in  
the soule as the spirits in  
the body, they run through  
all, move all, act all.

Thirdly, if you looke  
to God, our thoughts  
are that spot of ground,  
which he proclaiimes him-  
selfe sole Lord of, and  
makes it one of his grea-  
test titles, that hee *knows*  
*them*, and *judgeth them*.  
Kings attempt to rule your  
tongues,

tongues, to binde your hands, and rule your actions ; but God onely your thoughts. By them wee chiefly sanctifie him in our hearts, by them wee walke with God, and shall we not make conscience of them ?

Fourthly, if you looke to the worke and *power of grace*, wherein lies it, But in *bringing every thought into obedience* ? 2 Cor. 11.4. This is the glory of our religion above all other in the world : wherein lies the difficulty of it, the strictnes of it, what makes it so hard a taske : but the observing and keeping the thoughts in boũds: wherin lies the difference between sincere hearted Christians and

and others; but the keeping of our thoughts, without which all Religion is but *bodily exercise*. Papists may mumble over their prayers, hypocrites talke, but this is *godlineffe*.

Fiftly, if wee looke to things wee have a care of; if wee have a care of speeches, because Christ hath said, *wee shall answere for every idle word*; why not also for the same reason, should wee have a care of thoughts? which are the *words of the minde*, onely they want a shape, to bee audible to others, which the tongue gives them, for which you must answer as well as for words, *Heb. 4. 12. 1 Cor. 4.5.* If you be  
F carefull

carefull what companions you have, and whom you lodge in your houses, and who lie in your bosomes, then much more of your thoughts, which *lodge* in your hearts, which are not yours, but Gods houses; built for himselfe, and for Christ and his *Word* to dwell in: seeing also the things you think of have the most neare intimate fellowship and converse with you. And therefore when you thinke of the Word, it is said to talk with you, *Pro. 6.* If you be carefull of what you eat, because such blood you have, &c. then be careful what you think, thoughts being *Pabulum animæ*, as *Fully* calls them.

Thy

*Thy words did [I ease] saies  
Ieremiah, speaking of me-  
ditating on it.*

Sixthly, if you looke to the issue of things; what shall be the subject of that great inquest at the Day of Judgement? *the thoughts and councels, 1 Corin. 4.5.* And after the Day of Judgement, mens thoughts shall prove their greatest executioners: what are the cords God lashes you with to all eternity? your owne thoughts; *thoughts accusing, whereby you study over every sinne;* and every one will be as a dagger, *Isay 33.18.* the Hypocrites torment, is to meditate terrors, to study Gods wrath, and the Saints blef-

F 2      sednesse,

sednesse, and their owne  
finnes and misery.

Remedies against vaine  
Thoughts.

The first is to get the  
heart furnished and en-  
riched with a good stocke  
of sanctified and heavenly  
knowledge in spirituall and  
heavenly truths: *For a  
good man ( faith Christ )  
hath a good treasure in his  
Heart, Matt. 13.35. that  
is, hee hath all graces,  
so many precious truths  
which are as Gold in the  
Ore, which his thoughts,  
as the Mint, doth coine and  
beat*

beat out, and which words bring forth. *A good man, out of the good treasure of his heart, brings forth good things.* If therefore there bee not Mines of precious truths hid in the heart, no wonder if our thoughts coyne nothing but drosse, frothy vaine thoughts, for want of better materialls which should feed the Mint, are wanting. Therefore *Solomon* saith, *Wicked men forge, mint, or hammer wickednesse, Pro. 6.14.* so *Iunius* reads it: or if men have store of naturall knowledge, and want spirituall usefull knowledge, to themselves; although in company with others, they may bring forth good

F 3      things

things in speeches, yet when alone, their thoughts runne not on them. For this, take a place of Scripture, *Deut. 6. 6,7.* which shewes, that laying up the Word in the heart, and being much conversant in it, and getting knowledge out of it, is an effectuall meane to keepe our thoughts well exercised when wee are alone: for the end why these words are commanded to bee laid up in the hearts, ver. 5,6. is, as to teach them to others, so, to take up our thoughts when we are most retired, and alone, and when a man can doe nothing, but barely exercise his minde, in thinking; for when a man is

is a *riding*, or *walking*, or *lying downe*, and *rising up*, (which are often and usually our most retired times for thoughts, & are wholly spent in them, for many ride alone, and lie alone, &c.) yet then, saith hee, thou shalt *talk of the Word*: which command he that is alone cannot do, therefore the *talking* there meant is not onely ~~ab*opere* *adopere*~~ outward conference with others (though intended) as to talke to thy bed-fellow of it, and to thy companion: but suppose thou hast none, then to *talke of it* to thy selfe, for thoughts are ~~λόγος ἐνδοθεν~~, *talking of the minde*; and so comparing *Prov. 6.22.* with this place

F 4 (which)

(which will fitly interpret it) it appeares ; for *Solomon* exhorting to the same duty of *Binding the Word to the heart*, uteth this motive, which is the fruit thereof, *That when thou awkest, it shall talke with thee*, that is, by thy thinking of it, it will talke with thee when thou and it art alone : So as thou shalt not need a better companion, it will bee putting in and suggesting some thing.

Secondly, endeavour to preserve and keep up lively, holy, and spirituall affections in thy heart, and suffer them not to coole ; *Fall not from thy first love*, nor feare, nor joy in God ; or if thou hast growne remisse,

misfe, endeavour to recover those affections again. For such as your affections are, such necessarily must your thoughts be: and they encline the minde to think of such or such objects as will please them, rather than others ; therefore sayes *David*, *Psal. 119.97.* *How doe I lovethy Law ! it is my meditation day and night.* It was his love to it made him thinke of it so frequently. So *Mat. 3.16.* *Those that feared the Lord, and thought upon his Name,* are joyned : For what we feare wee often thinke of, and also speake of often ; therefore it is added ; *They speake of one to another ; feare made them thinke much of*

his name, and thinking of it  
made them speake of it: such  
affection, such thoughts,  
and such speeches, as they  
both are. And indeede  
thoughts and affections are  
*Sibi mutuo causæ*, the mu-  
tuall causes of each other:  
*Whiles I mused, the fire bur-  
ned*, Psalm. 39. so that  
thoughts are the bellowes  
that kindle and enflame  
affections: and then if  
they are enflamed, they  
cause thoughts to boile,  
therefore men newly con-  
verted to God, having new  
and strong affections, can  
with more pleasure thinke  
of God *than any*.

Thirdly, of all appre-  
hensions else, get thy heart  
possessed with deep, strong  
and

and powerfull apprehensions and impressions of Gods Holiness, Majestie, Omnipresence, and Omnisience. If any thoughts bee of power to settle, fixe, and draw in the minde of man, they are the *thoughts of him*. What is the reason that the Saints and Angels in Heaven have not a vaine thought to eternity, not a wry stroke, his presence fixeth them, their eie is never off him? Take a wanton garish loose spirit, let him be but in the presence of a Superiour whom hee feares and reverenceth, and it consolidates him. *Job* made therefore conscience of his thoughts, that hee durst not looke awry,

*Job*

*Job 31. 1,2.* because God sees it, saith hee. This drew in and fastned *Davids* thoughts, *Psal. 139.* from the first to the twelfth, he manifests what continuall apprehension hee had of Gods Greatnesse, Majesty, and Omnipresence; and what effect had this? *When I awake I am even before thee, verse 17.* Looke what objects they are, have most strong and deepe impressions in the minde, of those when a man awaketh, hee thinkes of first. Now such strong impressions had *Davids* thoughts of God, that still when hee awaked, hee was with him, and therefore wee finde it by experience to bee a meanes to avoid

avoid distractions in prayers, to enlarge a mans thoughts in his preparations before, or at the beginning with a consideration of Gods attributes and relations to us: and it will and doth make us serious.

Fourthly, especially do this when thou *awakeſt*, as *David* did there, *when I a-wake* I am still with thee: to prevent winde which ariseth from emptiness, men use to take a good draught in the morning, which the stomacke feeds; so to prevent those vaine, windy, frothy thoughts the heart naturally ingenders, and which arise from emptiness; first fill thy heart with the thoughts of God;

*Goe*

*Goe downe into his Wine-celler: observe it when you will, when you first open your eyes, there stand many suitors attending on you, to speake with your thoughts, even as Clients at Lawyers doores, many vanities and businesses; but speake thou with God first, hee will say something to thy heart, will settle it for all day: and this doe before the croud of businesses come in upon thee. Of some Heathens it is said that they worship *that* as their *God*, for all day, which they first see in the morning; so it is with the idols of mens hearts.*

*Fiftly, have a watchfull eye, and observe thy heart  
all*

all day, though they crowd in, yet observe them, let them know that they passe not unseene ; if a man would pray aright, he must watch also, who comes in, and who goes out : where strict watch and ward is kept, and Magistrates observant, the Marshall and Constable diligent to examine vagrant persons, you shall have few there ; that such swarmes of vagrant thoughts make their rendezvous, and passe, is because there is not strict watch kept.

This is in a manner all thou canst doe, for they will passe however, but yet complaine thou of them, whip them, and give them

them their passe.

Sixtly, please not thy fancy too much with vanities and curious sights, this engenders vaine thoughts; therefore *Job* sayes, *Chap. 31. vers. 1.* *That hee made a covenant with his eyes, lest he should thinke of a Maide,* *Prov. 4. 25. Let thine eyes looke right on.*

Seventhly, bee diligent in thy calling, and *what thine hand findes to doe, doe it with all thy might*, as it is, *Ecclesiastes 9. 10.* that is, putting to all the intention and strength of the minde that may bee in it. Let all the stremme runne to turne about thy Mill; the keeping thy thoughts to that channell, keeps them from over-

overflowing into vanity  
and folly, 2 Thes. 3. 11.  
*Those that labour not are busie bodies.* And 1 Tim. 5.13.  
*Idle, wandering, ἀπίστοις,* they  
are not onely called *ἀπόις*,  
*Idle only,* because not busie  
about what they should,  
but *ἀπίστοις*, as intent on  
things they should not ;  
they goe from house to  
house : so their bodies do,  
because their mindes doe  
wander, having no center.  
When *David* walked a-  
longe, what extravagancy  
did his spirit run into ? let  
the ground lye fallow,  
and what weeds will there  
soone grow in it ? God  
hath appointed us our cal-  
lings to entertaine our  
thoughts, and to finde  
them

them worke, and to hold them doing in the *intervims*, between the duties of his worship, because the spirit and thoughts of men are restlesse, and will bee busied some way; as therefore Kings keep those men that have active spirits in continual imployment, lest their heads should be working and plotting amisse: so did God appoint even in Paradise the active spirit of man, a calling to keepe him doing. God hereby hedgeth in mans thoughts, and sets them to goe in a narrow lane, knowing that if they are unconfined and left at liberty, they would like wilde *Aspes snuffe up the windes*, as *Ieremy* speaks,

*Ieremy*

*Ieremy 2. 14.* onely take heed of encumbering thy minde with too much businesse, more than thou canst graspe. It made *Marshe* forget that one thing necessary, being cumbered with many things, *Luke 10.* 4. this breeds care *兢兢*, which distractes the minde, (so the word signifies *兢兢*, as *dividing* it, and so causeth wandering thoughts nothing more, so that the minde is not it selfe. For this weakens it, enervates it, and this being vanity, *Exod. 18. 18.* said *Iethro* to *Moses*, when encombred with businesse, *Thou wilt fade away as a leafe*, out of which the moisture is dryed up, even that

that juyce which should be left for good duties will be exhausted: as dreames come through multitude of businesse, *Eccles. 5.3.* so do a multitude of thoughts from a cumber of business.

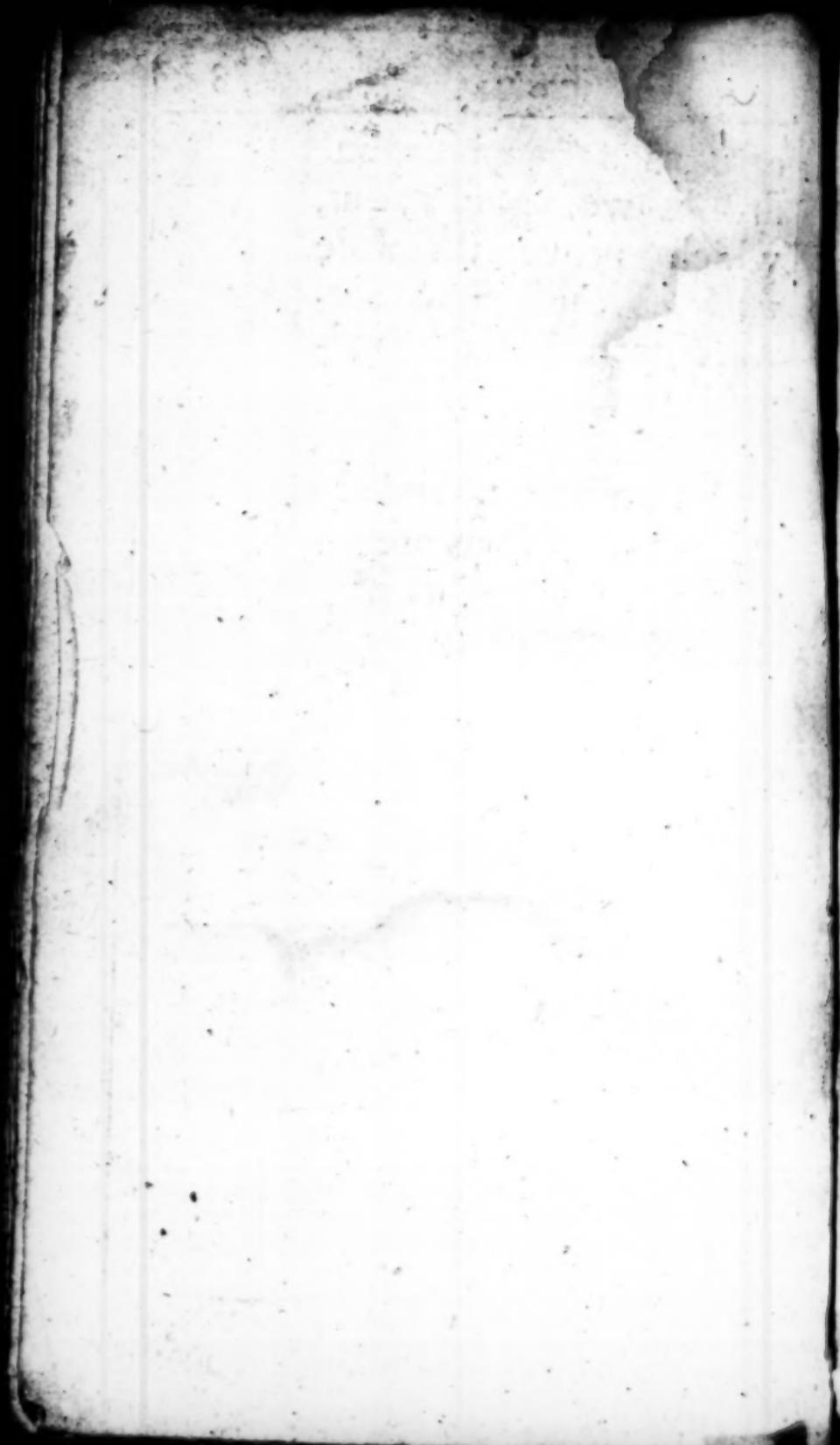
Eightly, in thy calling, and all thy wayes, for the successe and thy wayes therein, *Commit thy wayes to God, Prov. 16.3.* Commit thy way unto the Lord, and thy thoughts shall be establi-  
shed, or ordered: that is, kept from that confusion and disorder, and those swarms of cares, which others are annoyed with: and thereby thy aimes may bee as well accomplished: a few thoughts of faith would save us many thoughts of cares

cares and feares, in the busynesses wee goe about, which prove therefore *vaine*, because they forward not at all the busynesse wee intend. When such waves tosse the heart and turmoile it, and the windes of passions are up, if a few thoughts of faith come into the heart, they calm all presently.

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*FINIS.*

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Perlegi hunc tractatum,  
cui titulus est ( The vanity  
of thoughts ) in quo nihil  
reperio, quo minus impri-  
matur.

Rever. in Ch. Patri  
& D<sup>no</sup> D. Ar. Cant.  
Sac. Dom.

Ex Ed. Lamb  
Jul. I. 1637.

JOH. OLIVER.

the god is gone to come no  
god